

Great Celebration – July 3, 1886



During the past week, the event which has cast all others in the shade has been the unceasing preparations for the celebration of gigantic proportions of Saturday, the third.

A magnificent arch was placed across Range Street. The streets and alleys, both public and private, were all cleaned and relieved of obnoxious weeds. Many of the business houses were decorated with flags and bunting.

An excursion train brought 200 people from the south, then one from the west brought an equal number and several came on the train from the east. When the 10 o'clock train from the north arrived bearing the orators of the day and about 500 people, the crowd at the C. & E. I depot was immense. Here the procession was formed and a grander one never passed through the streets of our village. The Momence band, at their head, discoursed their choicest tunes.

Following the band in parade was the children's carriage, containing 38 little girls dressed in white, representing each of the 38 States of the Union, then carriages carrying the orators. These were followed by the employees of the Tiffany Pressed Brick Co., sixty in number, marching on foot headed by a martial band, and finally came the citizens generally with their different modes of conveyance.

At the Island, the program began with a prayer and an opening address by W.W. Parish, Jr., an address by the Hon. R.S. Tuthill of Chicago; song by the Momence Male quartette; address by Judge Joel B. Tiffany; music by the Momence Band; "Star-Spangled Banner" sung by Benjamin Chase. An adjournment was then made for dinner. Sports races and athletic contests followed dinner until four o'clock when the

program resumed. Morris Miller made one of his characteristic addresses; Burt Nichols, the boy orator, recited "Sheridan's Ride" and the exercises closed with a short address by R.A. Ballinger of the Kankakee Chief.

Dancing was well patronized from morning to two o'clock the following morning.

The fireworks in the evening were witnessed by a large number of people and were an entertaining spectacle.

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